

HUNTING SAFETY TIPS

1. Always point the muzzle in a safe direction. Do not point a firearm or bow at anything you do not intend to shoot. Keep your finger out of the trigger guard until the instant you are ready to fire. Always keep the safety on until ready to fire.
2. Treat every firearm or bow with the same respect you would show a loaded gun or nocked arrow. Every time you pick up a firearm, check to see if it is loaded. Be sure the chamber and magazine are empty and that the action is open until ready to be fired.
3. Be sure of your target and what is in front of and beyond your target. Before you pull the trigger you must properly identify game animals. Until your target is fully visible and in good light, do not even raise your scope to see it. Use binoculars! Determine that you have a safe backstop or background. Know how far bullets, arrows and pellets can travel. Never shoot at flat, hard surfaces, such as water, rocks or steel because of ricochets.
4. Unload firearms and unstring conventional bows when not in use. Know how your equipment operates. Store and transport firearms and ammunition separately and under lock and key. Store firearms and bows in cool, dry places. Use gun or trigger locks and guards when not in use.
5. Never climb a fence, a tree or a ladder with a loaded firearm or bow and arrows. Never jump a ditch or cross difficult terrain with a loaded firearm or nocked arrow. Never face or look down the barrel from the muzzle end. Be sure the only ammunition you carry correctly matches the gauge or caliber you are shooting. Learn the proper carries. Try to use the two-hand carry whenever possible because it affords you the best muzzle control. If you fall, be sure to disassemble the gun and check the barrel from the breech end for obstructions. Carry a field cleaning kit.
6. Be sure you know where your companions are at all times. Never swing your gun or bow out of your safe zone-of-fire. If in doubt, never take a shot. When hunting, wear daylight fluorescent orange so you can be seen from a distance or in heavy cover.
7. Control your emotions when it comes to safety. If you have just shot an animal you probably will be excited. You may turn with a loaded firearm back towards your friends or run with a loaded firearm towards a downed animal with the gun safety off. Show discipline. Rehearse in your mind what the safe actions will be. Show restraint and pass up shots that have the slightest chance of being unsafe.

Atchafalaya Basin Floodway System

8. Wear hearing and eye protection. Vibrations from gun blasts can cause loss of hearing. Wear glasses to protect your eyes from escaping gases, burnt powder (especially in black powder shooting), and other debris.
9. Don't drink alcohol or take drugs before or while handling firearms or bow and arrows. These substances affect emotions, making it easier to lose control.
10. Be aware of additional circumstances that require added caution or safety awareness. Also, practice reloading safety by following and reading all specific instructions. Ensure a safe future for you, others and the shooting sports!